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SUBJECT: UZBEKISTAN - WORLD TB DAY ACTIVITIES

REF: State 26078

1. (U) Per reftel, to mark World TB Day, Post devoted a session of its weekly Chay Chat Conversation Club to the topic of Tuberculosis and the challenge that it presents in Uzbekistan and around the world. On March 14, Dr. Benjamin Mills of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) highlighted the crisis that TB represents and caught the audience's attention when he told them that 40,000 people in Uzbekistan have active TB, a number that puts Uzbekistan 10th on the list of countries with the highest number of TB cases. Dr. Mills also described common symptoms of TB infection and offered some tips for how people can avoid becoming infected. He described treatments that are available for TB and stressed that virtually all forms of TB are curable. Finally, he told the audience about several ongoing projects in Uzbekistan that aim to raise public awareness about the disease and explained how USAID is collaborating with the government of Uzbekistan and NGO partners to implement several of them. He closed his presentation by showing a never-before-aired public service announcement that soon will be airing nationwide on television in both Russian and Uzbek.

2. (U) Through this informal conversation with approximately 100 young people and educators, the presenter raised awareness about this global problem and provided them with tips on how they can stay healthy and protect themselves from this infectious disease. Guests learned about the latest developments in global efforts to fight tuberculosis (TB) and also had the opportunity to collect information about TB. Post distributed several America.gov articles on the subject, as well as the brand-new issue of post's in-house quarterly newsletter Do'stlik ("friendship" in Uzbek).

NORLAND